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Connecting -- July 06, 2018

1 message

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Fri, Jul 6, 2018 at 9:19 AM

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Connecting

July 06, 2018

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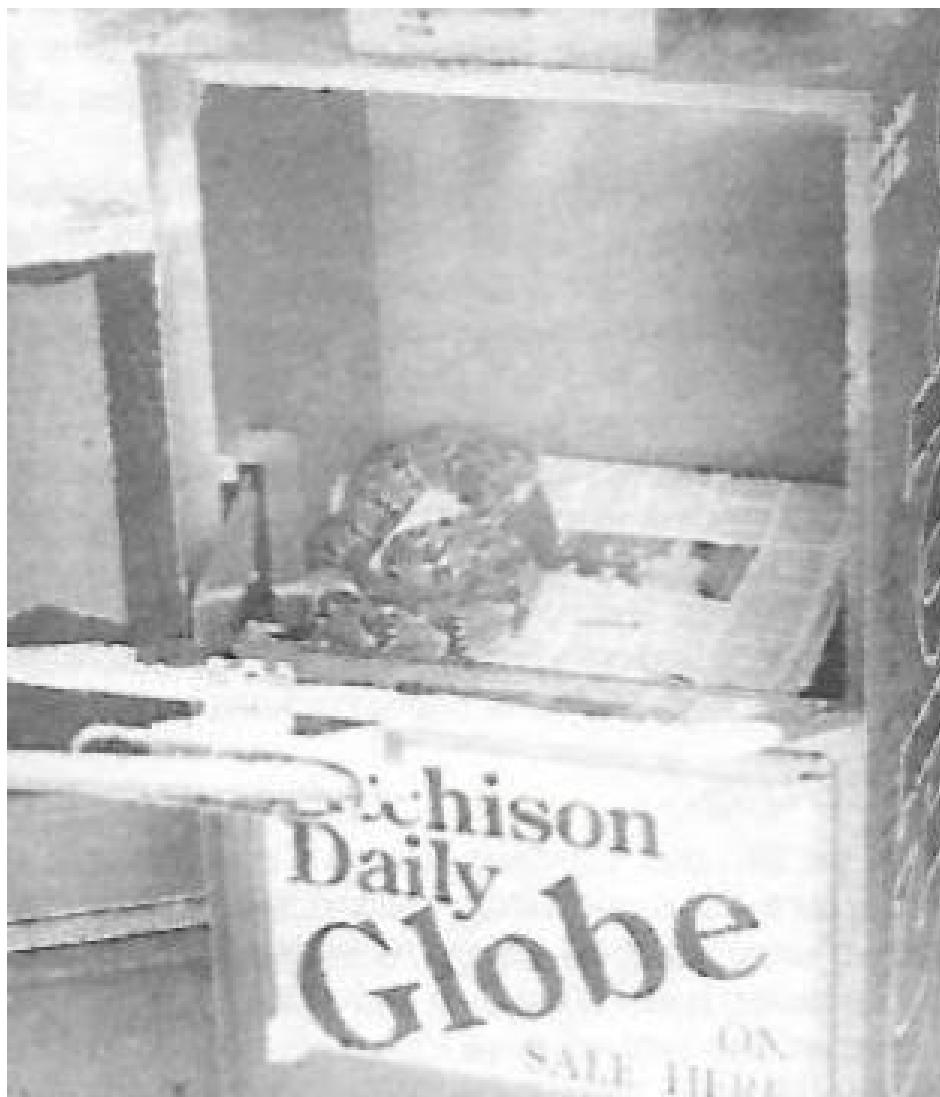
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Colleagues,

Good Friday morning!

Recent stories on the dangers faced by journalists doing their jobs - sparked by the shootings at the Capital Gazette in Annapolis that took the lives of five staffers - remind me of an act of terror directed at one of my Kansas AP newspaper members years ago.

And whenever I buy a newspaper from a coin-operated rack, I can't help but think of the **Atchison Daily Globe**.



The year was 1990 and the Globe, a small daily in the northeast Kansas community best known as the home of Amelia Earhart, had published stories that sparked the ire of someone who decided a unique way to exact revenge.

In the dead of night, that person placed a four-foot timber rattlesnake in the news rack just outside the front door of the Globe offices. The snake was found the next day by a Globe circulation clerk who was putting newspapers in the rack, recalled Connecting colleague **Jean Buchanan**, then managing editor of the Globe and now projects editor of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Fortunately, the employee was not bitten.

"Acts like this will not determine what we're going to publish," said Publisher **Gary Dickson** who added that he believed the snake was placed there as revenge for recent news stories.

In an AP story, Dickson would not discuss the subject of the stories that he thought had prompted the revenge but said he did not believe it was related to stories on the unsolved murder of his predecessor, Larry Sarvey, who was shot to death the previous summer. (No one has ever been convicted of that murder.)

The snake, which had large fangs, was removed by a high school science teacher and was killed before being added to the science department's specimen collection. The teacher said he decided against releasing the snake into the wild because he thought someone would be upset if they learned a four-foot rattler had been released on their property.

Buchanan and her then-AP bureau chief, me, still count the incident as one of the most memorable of our careers. As to the Sarvey murder, she said in an interview with the Topeka Capital-Journal on the 25th anniversary of his death ([Click here](#)) that there are two things she wants to know in life, both having to do with former Atchison residents: "What happened to Amelia Earhart and what happened in the Sarvey case."

Have a good weekend.

Paul

The challenge of brevity in the digital age

By **JOHN DANISZEWSKI**

News in the digital age comes in short - often very short - bursts, straight to our mobile phones, smart watches, tablets and computer screens. Sometimes these short takes are all an audience will read, not the longer story that follows. That's why we need to get them right.

The brevity creates new challenges for us not to be mere stenographers.

The AP's Statement of News Values and Principles requires us to report the news quickly, accurately and honestly. It also requires us to apply our news and editorial judgment to material we pick up.

Our standards on news releases say: "Under no circumstances can releases reach the wire in their original form; we can use information and quotes from releases, but we must check the material, augment it with information from other sources, and then write our own stories."

The principle applies as well to covering tweets that a person sends or sending news alerts or headlines off a politician or official's statements on TV or in a live interview. These can be equivalent to press releases.

AP standards remind us that we have a duty not to simply relay, channel or amplify such instant statements; we need to apply context and judgment - especially if the politician is asserting something controversial, disputable or incorrect. Even in our news alerts, headlines and tweets about a public figure's tweets, we need to show that we are not just re-transmitting the spin. In fact, if a public figure's tweet contains falsehood and adds nothing of significant news value, we may opt not to report it all, just as we pass covering many people's press releases on the merits.

When we know a statement is factually inaccurate, or highly debatable, we need to say so in some way.

We always must be on guard against simply passing on information that is not factual, even in our shortest news alerts, headlines and tweets. Instead, we must work to include context or find a way to show that the information is disputed.

[Click here](#) for link to this story.

Connecting mailbox

AP can and must do better

Terry Anderson ([Email](#)) - Unhappily, I completely agree with Bob Egelko (Wednesday's Connecting). AP's coverage of Israel has long included frequent use

of sloppy, one-sided phrases and explanatory grafts that are straight out of Israeli propaganda. It's an unthinking acceptance of terms designed by one side to try to achieve some kind of equivalence for a conflict in which there is none.

How about sticking to the facts: Gaza is a huge prisoner camp set up by Israel, periodically bombarded with massively destructive weapons of war against a mostly unarmed and civilian population. Israel even maintains a calorie limit (2,279 calories per day -) on food brought into Gaza during its regular blockades). [See this link](#). For years it blocked the importation of chocolate, for no particular reason. Israeli gunboats continually harasses and interferes with Gazan fishermen off the coast, reducing their catch. The demonstrations against this internationally condemned policy didn't "turn violent," as Bob noted. Israeli shot and killed thousands of unarmed protestors. Yes, Hamas is radically opposed to Israel's hegemony.

Surely there are better ways to factually describe the situation than lazy, loaded writing. I've thought since my days as Chief Middle East Correspondent that the world's greatest news agency can and must do better. But it persists. How does the AP explain that?

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Get the dog in the lead

Charles Richards - ([Email](#)) - Joe Frazier's recollection (Connecting, July 4) about his AP test in 1972, where he "got the dog in the lead," brought back memories of a story I wrote early in my career, as a newsman in UPI's Dallas bureau in 1965.

I don't remember what my story was about, but there was a dog and I got it into the lead, only to have the story handed back to me.

"What's the dog's name?" veteran Dallas UPI news editor Preston McGraw asked me. "Whenever you write about a pet, always get its name and put it in the story," he said.

That advice stuck with me through the years.

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Tad Bartimus among Civil Beat staffers honored by SPJ-Hawaii

Tad Bartimus ([Email](#)) - former AP special correspondent and bureau chief - was among the award winners from Honolulu Civil Beat in competition conducted by the Society of Professional Journalists' Hawaii chapter.

Honolulu Civil Beat was honored as the best news website in Hawaii for the eighth year in a row by SPJ and won 18 awards.

In the All Media competition, Bartimus won first place for health reporting for her work on rat lungworm disease and its discovery on Maui, and was named a finalist in feature columns.

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Spring fire captured by Norm Clarke's lens



Norm Clarke ([Email](#)) - The massive Spring Fire south of Pueblo, Colorado was approaching 100,000 scorched acres on July 4th, with more than 100 homes lost. It was already among the state's top three worst fires and with little progress of containment in sight. Former AP Cincinnati/San Diego/Los Angeles staffer Norm Clarke was vacationing in nearby Westcliffe, Colorado when the fire blew up.

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Scene from one of America's newest National Cemeteries



John Epperson (Email) - Washington Crossing National Cemetery in community of same name, Washington Crossing, PA. This cemetery, one of America's newest National Cemeteries, opened in 2010, and is located three miles downstream from the point on the Delaware River, where General George Washington led his a

Continental Army across the ice-choked river on December 25, 1776, capturing British forces and retaking the town of Trenton, New Jersey.

The flag is at half at mast for a service in progress, two days before our Independence Day.

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A window into what Big Apple looked like in last half of 1800s

Larry Margasak ([Email](#)) - Ever wonder what The Big Apple was like in the last half of the 1800s? The daily diary of piano manufacturer William Steinway provides a great window for the city that, even then, never slept. Here's my latest feature for the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, where I'm a volunteer in my post-AP life.

[Click here](#) for a link to the story, which begins:

What was the Big Apple like in the second half of the 19th century? The daily diary of piano manufacturer William Steinway opens a window into a New York of concerts, politics, sports, theater, restaurants, and much more. Steinway's diary resides in the National Museum of American History's Archives Center as part of the Steinway & Sons Records and Family Papers, 1857-1919. The diary covers the period from April 20, 1861, through November 8, 1896, about three weeks before Steinway's death.

"I wanna wake up in the city that doesn't sleep..."

In the last half of the 1800s, long before Frank Sinatra sang those words, before the city had a subway, when there were no Yankees and Knicks, the singer's words would still have resonated with many residents. Piano manufacturer William Steinway, who lived in upscale Gramercy Park in Lower Manhattan, was among them, and his daily diary opens a window into the New York he knew.

AP NewsBreak: US Army quietly discharging immigrant recruits

By **MARTHA MENDOZA** and **GARANCE BURKE**

SAN ANTONIO (AP) - Some immigrant U.S. Army reservists and recruits who enlisted in the military with a promised path to citizenship are being abruptly discharged, the Associated Press has learned.

The AP was unable to quantify how many men and women who enlisted through the special recruitment program have been booted from the Army, but immigration attorneys say they know of more than 40 who have been discharged or whose status has become questionable, jeopardizing their futures.

"It was my dream to serve in the military," said reservist Lucas Calixto, a Brazilian immigrant who filed a lawsuit against the Army last week. "Since this country has been so good to me, I thought it was the least I could do to give back to my adopted country and serve in the United States military."

Some of the service members say they were not told why they were being discharged. Others who pressed for answers said the Army informed them they'd been labeled as security risks because they have relatives abroad or because the Defense Department had not completed background checks on them.

Spokespeople for the Pentagon and the Army said that, due to the pending litigation, they were unable to explain the discharges or respond to questions about whether there have been policy changes in any of the military branches.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Paul Albright, Mark Mittelstadt.

Today's Newspaper Dilemma from a 130-year-old Perspective

Paul Albright (Email) - While pursuing my retirement hobby of historical research, I came across some 130-year-old observations that jumped off the page as nearly identical to much of the commentary heard today concerning the sweeping changes affecting the newspaper industry.

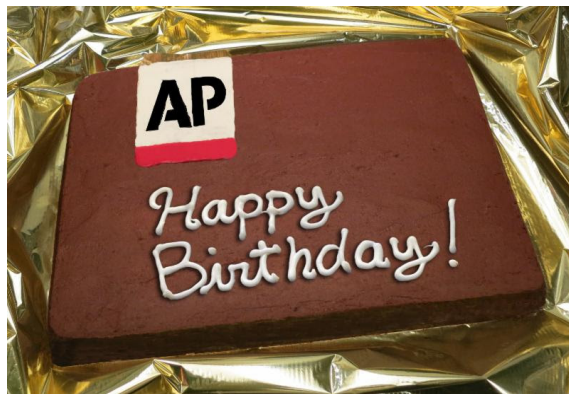
Do the following comments sound familiar from your reading of the situation confronting today's newspapers? And I quote:

- We have accustomed ourselves to say that the press is a great power. It were better, clearer, more definite to say that it is a great instrumentality. Undoubtedly it is the greatest moral instrumentality of the age.
- The production of a newspaper has degenerated from a profession into a business. Its motive is no longer ambition but greed.
- So that while the press has broadened the base of its operations it has lost the tone and keenness of a personal influence. The tendency is to do away with individuality...This is in the interest of stability. Editors perish, the paper survives.
- Yet there never was and there never can be a greatly influential paper in the world without some strong, individuality behind it.
- The character of the newspapers of to-day is a business character, because the strongest personality behind the paper is the business manager. Naturally, he subordinates everything else to the success of his own department. The paper thereby gains stability but loses power. It may reach more readers, for that is the business man's strong point; but it does not stir the souls of those who read it, because it is written without conviction and without enthusiasm.
- The papers of to-day follow their main motive intelligently and successfully, but that motive is profit; consequently, the best talent employed goes to the business department.
- The circulation is increased, not by the talent of the editor, but by the genius of the canvasser.
- Nothing in the purpose of the management, multiplied by nothing in the individuality of the writing staff, gives a product of nothing in the influence of the newspaper on public life.
-

These comments quoted above were written in 1887 by journalist J. P. MacCarthy for the *Daily Gazette* of Colorado Springs, Colorado. His commentaries were published in book form in 1888 as *Political Portraits* under his pen-name of "Fitz-Mac."

Are Fitz-Mac's observations relevant today? To a considerable extent, I think they are.

Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



To

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On Sunday to...

Norm Clarke - normclarke@me.com

Stories of interest

AP meeting with FBI raises ethical questions

By Jeff Mordock - The Washington Times

Associated Press reporters asked the FBI and Justice Department for a meeting in April 2017, hoping to find out whether their reporting on President Trump's former campaign chairman was on the right track.

But it was the AP reporters who would shape the FBI's investigation, an agent would later testify, when they disclosed the existence of a storage locker used by Paul Manafort.

Roughly a month after the meeting, the FBI obtained a search warrant for the locker, seizing 30 years' worth of financial documents that would become the backbone of the government's current prosecution of Mr. Manafort in two different courtrooms.

Conservative media-watchdog groups say the meeting illuminates a cozy relationship between news outlets they perceive as having an anti-Trump bias and Justice Department, which has been besieged by accusations of political partisanship.

"This is a lapse of journalistic ethics," said Don Irvine, chairman of Accuracy in Media. "It looks like The Associated Press is cooperating with the investigation and pushing this information to get Manafort so it could get to Trump."

An Associated Press spokeswoman said the meeting was an effort for reporters to learn more about the FBI's Manafort probe. She confirmed the reporters did ask officials if they knew about a storage locker belonging to Mr. Manafort, but said the reporters did not share its name or location.

"Associated Press journalists met with representatives from the Department of Justice in an effort to get information on stories they were reporting as reporters do," said Lauren Easton, a spokeswoman for the news outlet.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Doug Pizac.

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To rebuild trust, we need to change journalistic process (CJR)

By LEWIS WALLACE

EVEN IN THE AGE OF TRUMP, and with trust in journalists at historic lows, much of the industry remains convinced that it can triumph on truth-telling alone. But the problems are self-evident: News makers and consumers alike are overwhelmed with a constant frenzy of terrible news. For news producers, the questions feel urgent: Why are we telling the stories we tell, and whom do they serve? What ethics and values should govern our work? Should journalism, in short, take a lesson from activism?

In June, I co-organized a series of workshops at the Allied Media Conference, a gathering of media-based organizers, hosted annually in Detroit. This year the conference drew over 3,000 people, and the track focused on "movement journalism" drew hundreds of mostly independent and left-wing journalists, activists, and organizers. The journalists, predominantly people of color and women, came from around the country to participate in conversations about transforming journalistic ethics, economics, and aims for the twenty-first century.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Mark Mittelstadt.

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Journalists flying in to help Capital Gazette after shooting (The Hill)

BY AVERY ANAPOL

The parent company of an Annapolis, Md.-based newspaper said journalists are flying in to help in the paper's newsroom following a deadly shooting.

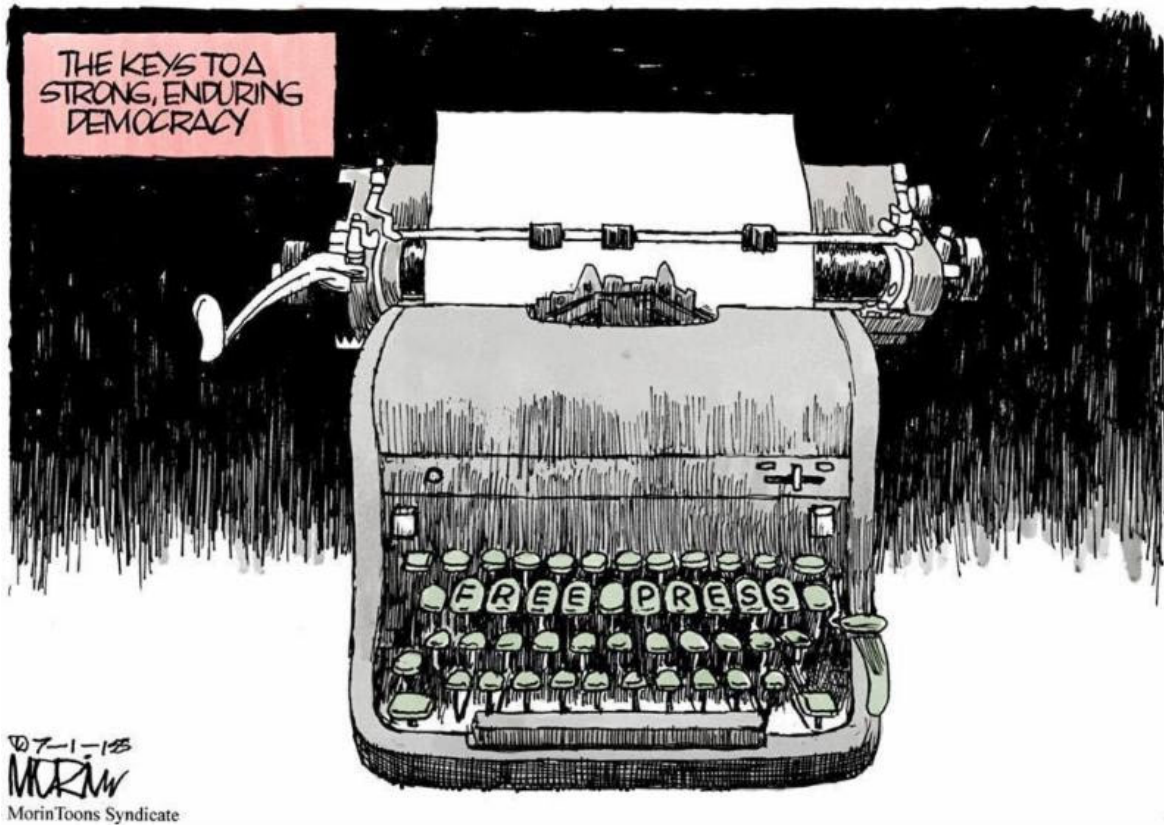
Trif Alatzas, publisher and editor-in-chief of The Baltimore Sun Media Group, told CNN's Brian Stelter that several reporters arrived to the Capital Gazette's temporary offices this week from other outlets across the country.

"We had journalists fly in from the Chicago Tribune yesterday," Alatzas said. "We had somebody here from the Allentown Morning Call. Somebody from the Virginian Pilot."

"We've gotten offers from the entire journalism community, saying 'Hey, whatever you need, we'll send support,'" he added.

Read more [here](#).

The Final Word



Today in History - July 6, 2018



By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, July 6, the 187th day of 2018. There are 178 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On July 6, 1957, Althea Gibson became the first black tennis player to win a Wimbledon singles title as she defeated fellow American Darlene Hard 6-3, 6-2. The Harry S. Truman Library, the nation's first presidential library, was dedicated in Independence, Missouri. Sixteen-year-old John Lennon first met 15-year-old Paul McCartney when Lennon's band, the Quarrymen skiffle group, performed a gig at St. Peter's Church in Woolton, Liverpool.

On this date:

In 1535, Sir Thomas More was executed in England for high treason.

In 1777, during the American Revolution, British forces captured Fort Ticonderoga.

In 1885, French scientist Louis Pasteur tested an anti-rabies vaccine on 9-year-old Joseph Meister, who had been bitten by an infected dog; the boy did not develop rabies.

In 1917, during World War I, Arab forces led by T.E. Lawrence and Auda Abu Tayi captured the port of Aqaba (AH'-kah-buh) from the Ottoman Turks.

In 1933, the first All-Star baseball game was played at Chicago's Comiskey Park; the American League defeated the National League, 4-2.

In 1942, Anne Frank, her parents and sister entered a "secret annex" in an Amsterdam building where they were later joined by four other people; they hid from Nazi occupiers for two years before being discovered and arrested.

In 1944, an estimated 168 people died in a fire that broke out during a performance in the main tent of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus in Hartford, Connecticut.

In 1964, the movie "A Hard Day's Night," starring The Beatles, had its world premiere in London. British colony Nyasaland became the independent country of Malawi.

In 1967, war erupted as Nigeria sent troops into the secessionist state of Biafra. (The Biafran (bee-AF'-ruhn) War lasted 2 1/2 years and resulted in a Nigerian victory.)

In 1971, jazz trumpeter and singer Louis Armstrong died in New York at age 69.

In 1988, 167 North Sea oil workers were killed when explosions and fires destroyed a drilling platform. Medical waste and other debris began washing up on New York City-area seashores, forcing the closing of several popular beaches.

In 1997, the rover Sojourner rolled down a ramp from the Mars Pathfinder lander onto the Martian landscape to begin inspecting the soil and rocks of the red planet.

Ten years ago: The U.S. launched an airstrike in Afghanistan's Nuristan province; the Afghan government later said 47 civilians died. President George W. Bush arrived in Japan for his eighth and final Group of Eight summit, where he emphasized the urgency of providing aid to Africa. Rafael Nadal won a riveting five-set Wimbledon final, 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (5), 6-7 (8), 9-7, denying Roger Federer a sixth straight title in a match that lasted 4 hours, 48 minutes.

Five years ago: A runaway train carrying crude oil derailed in eastern Quebec, igniting fires and explosions that destroyed much of the town of Lac-Mégantic and killed 47 people. An Asiana Airlines Boeing 777 from Seoul, South Korea, crashed while landing at San Francisco International Airport; of the 307 people on board Flight 214, three Chinese teens were killed. A solar-powered aircraft, the Solar Impulse, completed the final leg of a history-making cross-country flight, gliding to a smooth stop at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. Marion Bartoli won her first major title, defeating Sabine Lisicki 6-1, 6-4 in the Wimbledon final. Jimmie Johnson became the first driver in 31 years to sweep Daytona International Speedway.

One year ago: The maker of opioid painkiller Opana ER said it would stop selling the drug at the request of the Food and Drug Administration in an effort to curb abuse.

Today's Birthdays: The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is 83. Actor Ned Beatty is 81. Singer Gene Chandler is 78. Country singer Jeannie Seely is 78. Actor Burt Ward is 73. Former President George W. Bush is 72. Actor-director Sylvester Stallone is 72. Actor Fred Dryer is 72. Actress Shelley Hack is 71. Actress Nathalie

Baye is 70. Actor Geoffrey Rush is 67. Actress Allyce Beasley is 67. Rock musician John Bazz (The Blasters) is 66. Actor Grant Goodeve is 66. Country singer Nanci Griffith is 65. Retired MLB All-Star Willie Randolph is 64. Jazz musician Rick Braun is 63. Actor Casey Sander is 63. Country musician John Jorgenson is 62. Former first daughter Susan Ford Bales is 61. Hockey player and coach Ron Duguay (doo-GAY') is 61. Actress-writer Jennifer Saunders is 60. Rock musician John Keeble (Spandau Ballet) is 59. Actor Pip Torrens is 58. Actor Brian Posehn is 52. Actor Robb Derringer is 51. Political reporter/moderator John Dickerson is 50. Actor Brian Van Holt is 49. Rapper Inspectah Deck (Wu-Tang Clan) is 48 TV host Josh Elliott is 47. Rapper 50 Cent is 43. Actress Tamera Mowry is 40. Actress Tia Mowry is 40. Comedian-actor Kevin Hart is 39. Actress Eva (EH'-vuh) Green is 38. Actor Gregory Smith is 35. Rock musician Chris "Woody" Wood (Bastille) is 33. Rock singer Kate Nash is 31. Actor Jeremy Suarez is 28.

Thought for Today: "Fear is forward. No one is afraid of yesterday." - Renata Adler, American writer.

Got a story or photos to share?

Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.

- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.

- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.

- **"A silly mistake that you make"** - a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.

- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.

- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.



- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?

- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.

- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.

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